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A summary of a conference attended by 140 participants presents the consensus of these representatives. Discussed were such issues as the fundamentals of freedom, efforts to strengthen the dedication to the ideals of freedom through the improvement of curriculum, teaching materials, and teacher effectiveness, the promotion of closer school-community relations, and the educational role of the Federal government. Long range objectives were also developed. The conference addresses of Sterling M. McMurrin, Philip H. Coombs, and Abraham Ribicoff are included. (NH)

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Education for Freedom and World Understanding

A Report of the Working Committees of the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education
March 26–28, 1962 • Washington, D.C.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM COLLECTION

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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May 11, 1962

The Honorable Sterling M. McMurrin
U.S. Commissioner of Education
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Dr. McMurrin:

We are pleased to transmit to you our report of the recent Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education. It consists of an introductory statement concerning the Conference and three major sections: Fundamentals of Freedom, Immediate Tasks, and Looking Ahead.

The report is not intended to be a systematic or comprehensive analysis of the problems discussed by the Conference; it is rather a compilation of the main ideas issuing from the deliberations of the several committees, edited for continuity. The report has been prepared for publication by Professor Richard D. Poll of the Brigham Young University, working in close cooperation with us.

It has been a pleasure to participate in the planning and work of the Conference and in the formulation of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee Chairmen

Waldemer P. Read
George W. Angell
Owen B. Kiernan
Martin W. Essex
Walter H. C. Laves

Foreword

THIS REPORT, Education for Freedom and World Understanding, summarizes the deliberations of the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education, which was convened at the Office of Education in Washington, D.C., on March 26–28, 1962.

At my invitation, approximately 140 leaders in American education came together, at their own personal expense or at the expense of the institutions which they serve. They were invited to consider the state of American education in the light of our traditional ideals of freedom and the present need for achieving a larger understanding of other cultures, and to indicate ways and means of educating our people more effectively for the attainment of the goals of a free society. They undertook this task with unusual enthusiasm and with a profound grasp of the issues involved.

I believe that the American people are indebted to the Conference participants for the statement that has resulted from their discussions. I commend it to the attention of all who are concerned with the grave task of preserving and extending human freedom.

This report does not necessarily express the views of every participant in the Conference and is not intended to be a statement of policy of the U.S. Office of Education. It is published by the Office of Education in the hope that it will stimulate widespread and responsible discussion of the issues that occupied the attention of the Conference.

STERLING M. MCMURRIN,
Commissioner of Education.

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Concerning the Conference

THE 140 PARTICIPANTS in the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education who met in Washington, D.C, March 26–28, 1962, were broadly representative of education in the United States. The ambitious and dynamic educational enterprise of which they are part was created by and for a free people. This educational enterprise now faces the challenge of a most dramatic growth in the scope and implications of human knowledge. It has evoked admiration and imitation among many peoples whose rising expectations require education for fulfillment.

In the light of these facts, the Conference participants might have used the occasion to celebrate our national educational achievement. They did not. Discussion was characterized by the acknowledgment of shortcomings, the clash of ideas, and an eagerness to strengthen and improve the educational resources of the United States.

Aware that diversity of beliefs and practices is both the trademark and the bulwark of a free society, the conferees sought to define that common core of ideals which should command the allegiance of all Americans, and to discover ways and means to give those ideals more effective expression in education. Our formal systems of elementary, secondary and higher schools were examined, as were those aspects of our educational effort which go beyond the classroom in time and space. In attempting to relate the content of our educational enterprise to the goals of our civilization and our Nation, the Conference confronted afresh the distance between the professed objectives and the actual behavior of both educators and the general public.

Such questions as these were asked:

To what extent are we teaching about and creating understanding of our own institutions and the cultures of other peoples?

To what extent are we conveying significant knowledge and encouraging citizens to use this knowledge wisely and creatively?

To what extent are we emphasizing the connections between learning and action, and developing in our people the will to act with reason and in accord with our basic values?

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How can we better extend our pursuit of excellence and intensify our search for the accommodation of the unique individual?

The Conference, convened by the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sterling M. McMurrin, included more administrators than classroom teachers, in view of the necessity of discussing changes at the policy-forming level before experts on content and method can go to work on specific programs. Without extensive preliminaries, the conferees undertook what was to be an *exploratory* rather than a definitive examination of the ideals of American freedom and the international dimensions of education. The subject was broad, the agenda open, and the discussion free. After 3 days of sessions, participants expressed the feeling that there should be further discussion of the basic issues and that the future of our country, and of mankind, merits additional exploration of these issues as the prelude to an American consensus on how to use education more effectively to prepare the child of today for life in the world of tomorrow.

This working conference was divided into five committees, whose titles and chairmen follow:

1. FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS. Dr. Waldemer P. Read, Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Utah.
2. CURRICULUM CONTENT. Dr. George W. Angell, President, State University College at Plattsburgh, Plattsburgh, New York.
3. TEACHERS AND MATERIALS. Dr. Owen B. Kiernan, Commissioner of Education, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
4. USE OF PRESENT RESOURCES. Dr. Martin W. Essex, Superintendent of Akron Public Schools, Akron, Ohio.
5. LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES. Dr. Walter H. C. Laves, Chairman, Department of Government, Indiana University.

The full list of conference participants is included at the end of this report.

Three general sessions of the Conference were addressed by Abraham Ribicoff, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Philip H. Coombs, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, and Commissioner McMurrin. Committees devoted the balance of each day to round-table discussions. In their deliberations the committees occasionally plowed the same ground, but they were rarely working at cross-purposes. Not every committee report had the unanimous endorsement of the group which produced it, and no attempt was made in the final general session to test the reaction of the full Conference to particular statements. The task of synthesizing the reports for pub-

lication was assigned to Dr. Richard D. Poll, Professor of History and Political Science, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Successive drafts of this document were reviewed by the five committee chairmen, who do not necessarily concur in every recommendation but who agree that the sense of the working groups is accurately represented.

Because of the strong impression of consensus among the participants as the Conference closed, this report is judged worthy of serious consideration by educational institutions and agencies, by committees and conferences which may in the future address themselves to the same subjects, and by the people of the United States at large.

Fundamentals of Freedom

TO SUGGEST how our schools should promote the ideals of American freedom and the international dimensions of education requires thoughtful review of the fundamental assumptions which underlie our way of life and give direction to our participation in world affairs. In considering such assumptions, this Conference discovered no revolutionary truths and produced no novel formulations of the democratic faith. It was impressed, however, with the need for expressing this faith in terms of contemporary problems, and for cutting through the fog of platitude and special pleading which blurs the image of America in our own eyes and weakens its impact abroad.

Elsewhere this report calls for an organized national effort to define more clearly the fundamentals of freedom. The following observations seek to identify some of the key concepts and problems associated with this task. Such observations may be useful in any program to evaluate or improve citizenship education in the United States.

Recognizing the Worldwide Challenge

- ★ **The gravest immediate threat to freedom is the ruthless Communist effort to impose a blueprint for the future upon a world which is in widespread revolt against the past.**
- ★ **The outcome will be influenced, not by learning Marxist laws of history but by applying intelligence and the lessons of experience to the harmonizing and fulfilling of the legitimate hopes of mankind.**

A critical factor in this effort will be our capacity to develop our human resources to a high level of competence and efficiency. The challenge of our day is both old and new. We are engaged again in the battle against political tyranny, with liberty's foes arrayed on the left and on the right, and at the same time we face worldwide tensions stemming from the aspirations of all men for a better life. A generation ago we asked only to be left alone to enjoy the fruits of our unique heri-

tage. Today we find ourselves not only defending our heritage against formidable assault, but also committing its fruits to the support of human dignity and freedom everywhere.

The fearsome novelty in the present challenge is the attempt of the Communist movement to be the sole articulator and guide for world-wide change, and to impose ideological unity by means of military and economic power and by the innumerable techniques of subversion. Our times would be difficult without this threat; with it they are perilous. The ability of the Communists to identify themselves with the aspirations of unhappy peoples has been demonstrated more than once. The Communists' conviction that the course of history must conform to their blueprint is a special sort of danger, since such a conviction may lead men in power—as it led Hitler—to hurry the hand of destiny by violent means.

We do not believe that the future is *destined* to be either totalitarian or free. The destiny of mankind will be controlled, not by those who pretend to read the laws of history, but by those who are willing to use their intelligence and experience to work out a balanced reconciliation of the manifold interests of men as individuals and as groups. We have faith that freedom will prevail, but we must give meaning and substance to our faith by courageously dedicating our best efforts to the cause of freedom.

Clarifying the Meaning of Freedom

- ★ **The central issue of our day is human freedom, and the crux of freedom is the right of individual choice.**
- ★ **Freedom of action has necessary limits, but freedom of expression must not be denied, even to those on the left and on the right who are the enemies of liberty.**
- ★ **The United Nations merits this country's support as an instrument by which worldwide aspirations for freedom and human dignity can be advanced.**

To avow that the central issue of today is human freedom is to state at once a fundamental principle, a platitude, and a half-truth. We Americans and all those who share our commitment are responsible for the platitude to the extent that we recite odes to liberty on ceremonial occasions and ignore, abridge, or deny the implications of liberty in our daily activities. Our challengers in the current ideological struggle market the half-truth when they, too, praise freedom but then insist that the in-

dividual achieves it only by subordinating his desires to the demands of the state.

As a fundamental precept, freedom affirms the central importance of the individual and the desirability of his enjoying wide initiative in making the choices which affect his own life and the society of which he is a part. The Declaration of Independence still goes to the heart of the matter: Man has intrinsic worth, he has inalienable rights, and his is the primary responsibility for their proper exercise and defense.

Freedom is not a simple concept. It takes many forms and relates to many areas of human behavior. The social conditions and the capacities of men inevitably place limitations on it. It should not be confounded with other human values and yet, though it may at times compete with them, it is an essential condition for the satisfaction of most of them. The attainment of freedom, moreover, rests upon a general acceptance of two closely related qualities: reason and responsibility. For it is not a commodity to be acquired and hoarded; it is a spirit whose meaning must be discovered and applied by each generation.

A distinction of importance lies between freedom of expression and freedom of action. The latter is necessarily limited by the alternatives presented by the environment and by the requirements for the survival of the individual and society. One cannot reasonably choose to swim where there is no water; nor may he legally choose to gain his daily bread by theft. Freedom of expression, on the other hand, is essential to the fruitful communication of free minds and so must not be denied. It must apply even in the hard case of those who are themselves opposed to free speech. It is vital to that rational inquiry which is a primary purpose of education.

Recognition of the freedom of others and the acceptance of the norms for social behavior are not only limitations on freedom but also prerequisites for it. Thus, a legal system that translates into practice the fundamental values in which there is wide consensus is indispensable to an orderly society. Education should encourage the understanding of the function and principles of law, how it comes into being, and how it may be reshaped to support freedom in the midst of change.

Since even a government of laws finds expression through men, freedom under law demands responsible public participation in the selection of leaders. It further requires that both support and criticism of leadership be reasonable and responsible. Categorical mistrust of leadership because it sometimes errs is as injurious to liberty as blind allegiance to demagogue or dictator. The implications for education are apparent.

Because the availability of choices is a general condition of freedom, a variety in the opportunities offered the members of a society is an essential contribution to the range of the exercise of their freedom. Thus, although historical evidence on the necessity of political freedom for creative achievement in the arts and sciences is inconclusive, a considerable degree of freedom for the artist, the scientist, and the scholar, and a receptiveness to novelty on the part of some segments of society are requisite for the creative originality and imagination without which a society loses adaptability and dynamism. Even where political regimentation does not exist, the right to creative originality must be defended against the massive structures and pressures of society which are driving for conformity. The experience of independent choice-making satisfies a basic human desire for the dignity of a responsible being.

The denial of freedom to any individual or group, whether by design, thoughtlessness, or malfunctioning social or economic process, must be resisted by all who prize it. Equality of opportunity, including education, vocation, residence, movement, political participation, and religious expression, is a condition for the growth of freedom.

Because freedom should be universal, no political or cultural barriers to its realization ought to be regarded as permanent. The United Nations, which already provides evidence that the aspiration for freedom and dignity is as widespread as humanity, is a vehicle by which the United States can help to make that aspiration a reality. As technology shrinks the world, greater efforts must be made to cope with poverty, illiteracy, disease, and economic and political oppression which impede man's progress toward happiness and responsibility. Education offers the means for equipping believers in freedom with perspective and knowledge for effective worldwide service and with that sympathetic insight which does not ask for whom the bell tolls.

Focusing on the Real Issue

- ★ **Lovers of freedom must resist the imposition by force or subversion of any set of dogmas—any compulsory creed.**
- ★ **Our right to be freedom's champion abroad is directly dependent on our ability to make freedom effective at home.**
- ★ **The answer to the present challenge is neither fearful retreat nor a demand for total victory, but responsible and courageous leadership in the worldwide, unending effort to achieve liberty and dignity for all mankind.**

Our tradition is basically experimental, and it delights in diversity. The American image may sometimes seem confused because it contains many races, creeds and cultures, but the confusion in the image represents the dynamic interaction which leads to change and social progress. Our traditional disposition to contain diversities without coercion or destruction of their individuality can and must be extended to meet the challenges of our day. Just as we developed federalism to accommodate differences in politics and the separation of church and state to permit diversities in religion, so today we must seek ways to accommodate differences in economic, social, and cultural structures and concepts.

Our ability to accept and adjust to diversity is a central element in the American tradition, and we should guard against sacrificing this ability in an attempt to produce a dogma to oppose communism. We do not believe that there are, *a priori,* doctrinaire solutions to political, economic or social problems, because the facts are too numerous to be handled by, and the individual interests too precious to be coerced into, a single scheme. We should pride ourselves not on opposing our doctrine to Communist doctrine, but in opposing the imposition by force or subversion of any single set of dogmas. We are fundamentally a religious people; yet our objection to communism is not primarily that it is atheistic, but rather that it would forcibly deny to men the right of belief or disbelief.

The issue is not creed, but choice.

So, too, in the area of economic planning. What should be resisted is not the idea that economic planning may be appropriate to certain conditions, but the attempt, often in the face of clear evidence of inadequacy and failure, to dogmatically impose a particular scheme on all economic problems. Our own economy, seen realistically and not through the stereotypes of rhetoric, is a mixture of diverse systems—social control, individual initiative, public and private enterprise. The test of economic systems is not their theoretical consistency, but their consequences. As history shows, the American people are quite willing to tolerate economic planning provided that it is not accompanied by political subjection and that its efficacy is constantly tested by actual results in bettering the conditions of life.

For the proper discharge of our educational responsibility toward the subject of communism, this distinction between theory and method is important. As a form of utopian philosophy, communism has venerable antecedents and a measure of appeal to the very optimistic and the very desperate. As the ideology of a small state, it would probably come

under censure only to the extent that its procedures were tyrannical; so do the petty fascist and racist despotisms of today. It is as the political program of the Sino-Soviet bloc that communism poses a grave threat, because it blends the fervor of a crusade with the naked force of great national power. One of the most urgent problems which we face in our attempt to cope with the Cold War is to ascertain to what extent the conflict and competition among powerful nations is altered by the overlay of Marxism-Leninism.

In defining our problems and their connection with the Communist menace, it must also be emphasized that the challenges of our time are both foreign and domestic, and that they are in many respects the same challenges. We, too, are faced with the revolution of rising expectations, now clearly expressed by our Negro citizens as well as by the unemployed, the migrant farm workers, the aged, and other groups seeking social and economic dignity in our society. Our right to be freedom's champion abroad is directly based on our ability to make freedom effective at home.

In meeting the threat of political tyranny from abroad, we must guard against producing it at home. Extremists of both left and right seek to curb free expression, and at the present moment the voice from the right is the more strident. Our schools, which should bear the burden of inculcating the intellectual habits of free men, are being pressured to mount an emotional crusade against communism. Radically conservative movements often overstate the role of the Communists in producing domestic and international tensions, and then marshal frustration-born emotions against constructive measures to deal with the real causes of these tensions.

Reason and responsibility being the foundation stones of a free society, our educational enterprise must doubly cherish them in times of stress such as the present. We need to understand the world struggle, but we can best come to know both challenge and appropriate response through sound educational processes. There already exists an enormous amount of research and a wealth of experience on the nature of communism and other sources of present troubles, and on possible ways to deal with them. The schools can and must do a better job of giving this material wide audience. An informed people may well prove to be freedom's best defenders.

The answer to the challenge of our day does not lie in fearful retreat or in overblown notions like "total victory." We are a revolutionary people, and we should be able not merely to tolerate but to offer leader-

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ship and help to a world in turbulent change. We have ourselves been a microcosm of the world of many races and religions, with various political, economic, and social institutions, and we have had experience in managing the tensions that these diversities produce. We have faced tyranny before. To the extent that the foes are old, we should not be afraid, because we have met and mastered them in generations past. To the extent that they are new, we should face them bravely and with the determination to protect and strengthen our priceless heritage of freedom.

Immediate Tasks

THE CONFERENCE assumed the primary responsibility of reviewing present efforts to teach the ideals of American freedom and the international dimensions of education, in terms of programs, accomplishments, resources, needs, and measures to effect improvements. This summary takes for granted, as the Conference committees did, the many things which our schools are doing well. It calls attention to matters requiring attention and suggests possible lines of action.

Strengthening the Foundations of Education Through Research

★ **A task force of intellectual leaders should be organized to produce a clear-cut statement of the American ideals and values which should permeate our educational enterprise.**

★ **The national interest requires a research investment in the social sciences and humanities comparable in size and scope to that presently being made in the natural sciences.**

1. *The further identification and clarification of American values and their relationship to the behavior of our people should be assigned top priority.* The variety of interpretations and the vagueness of statements now available are major obstacles to marshaling our educational resources for strengthening freedom among ourselves and for extending it to others. A task force of intellectual leaders should be brought together to hammer out an incisive statement on the ideals of American society which should permeate our educational effort. This statement should then be refined on the basis of public discussion, and professional and lay groups with relevant programs should be encouraged to re-interpret their own statements of purpose or principles in its terms. The project would be given great impetus by White House and/or congressional support. In line with previous suggestions, it is here emphasized that such a statement of American values and precepts should serve our

schools as a compass which points toward freedom, not as a dogma which restricts freedom.

2. *A series of national and regional seminars should bring together the scholars and teachers of the various disciplines primarily concerned with the citizenship aspects of education.* These seminars should address themselves specifically to the preparation of teachers and the content of civic instruction at all levels, either to identify areas requiring research and experimentation or to propose measures suitable for immediate adoption.

3. *Colleges and universities, foundations and other appropriate agencies should establish new research centers for the study of American society, and strengthen those in existence.* Financial support and complete freedom of operation are as essential in this type of research as in the natural sciences. Among the subjects calling for prompt and comprehensive investigation are these:

a. The behavior of our adult population, in terms of the extent to which people recognize and respond intelligently to the freedom and responsibilities of life in the United States.

b. The effectiveness at various school levels of tests of knowledge and behavior relative to the ideals of American freedom, and of the effectiveness of curriculum content and organization for teaching these ideals.

c. The nature of the learning process, including its intimate relationship to curriculum development.

4. *There is need for the establishment of new curriculum research centers at a number of schools and universities throughout the United States, as part of the major curriculum revision proposed elsewhere in this report.*

5. *Colleges and universities should expand and develop new research centers for the study of other societies.* Further experimentation is needed in the study of a foreign culture through the use of its native language.

6. *The encouragement and coordinating of the reporting of research for the benefit of both professional and popular audiences calls for increased national leadership.* The rapid growth of knowledge has created a major problem of communicating the results of research.

7. *Nothing short of an investment of talent and resources comparable in size and scope to that presently being made in the natural sciences will accomplish the research and program development for the social*

sciences and humanities which the national interest requires. Encouraging in this connection is the very recent report of the President's Science Advisory Committee, which calls for support of basic research in the behavioral sciences on an unprecedented scale and invites the National Academy of Sciences, the National Science Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and other research-oriented bodies to participate in this expanded effort.

Improving the Curriculum in Citizenship Education

- ★ **The entire curriculum from kindergarten through high school should be redesigned in terms of the needs and goals of a free nation and an interdependent world.**
- ★ **International understanding requires the objective study of political, economic, and social systems which are unlike, even opposed to, those of the United States.**

1. *A massive effort is needed to redesign and repackage the entire course offering from kindergarten through high school.* Existing educational programs are largely the result of piecemeal changes resulting from narrow pressures at different times. The most valiant efforts to preserve unity of purpose and sequential development of content, aimed directly at achieving the overall goals of a free society, have been insufficient to prevent proliferation and fragmentation. Refocusing is called for, and rearrangement of content into rational and workable schedules for teachers and students.

2. *The social studies program should be reexamined and reformulated in the same manner as has occurred or is now occurring in such fields as chemistry, physics, mathematics, foreign languages, and English.* The central importance of the ideals of American freedom and international understanding should be kept in view in reshaping content and sequence. Citizens from all sectors of society should participate in various stages of this review.

3. *As increasing world responsibilities are accepted by the United States, the colleges and universities should continue to review their roles in international education.* Both curriculums and student programs may require enriching and broadening to produce the variety of technically skilled people needed to represent the United States abroad, to provide the growing number of foreign students with a meaningful experience in Americanism, and to provoke a sense of civic responsibility among

those who will go from the halls of ivy to positions of leadership in all parts of the world.

4. *An exploding body of knowledge and a growing population with educational opportunities emphasize the importance of improving the technology of communication.* This implies continuing concentration on bettering communications within the formal teaching process; it also underscores the significance of the mass media, which have hardly begun to fulfill their educational promise. Press, radio and television share this responsibility, the last being first in direct classroom potential. The major television networks should be encouraged, with the assistance of education agencies and scholarly societies, to produce more academic offerings dealing with area studies; American history, institutions and values; and national and international affairs.

5. *Current citizenship competencies require a more comprehensive knowledge of the societies and cultures of other peoples than heretofore.* The ways and means of communication are so changed as to require a new approach to teaching about other societies. When the child can be an eyewitness to world events, the old approach beginning with the family and progressing to the community, the state, and the regions of the world is no longer sufficient. A new emphasis and organization of elementary and secondary instruction is particularly indicated for the study of the non-Western world. Area studies are a promising vehicle which has only begun to be tested. At appropriate grade levels, such instruction must include the objective consideration of institutions and cultures which are unlike, even antagonistic to, our own. Maturity in today's world does not regard all differences as intolerable.

6. *The international dimensions of education and the contracting political environment require the rapid extension of instruction in the languages of other peoples, beginning with the elementary grades.* Experimental elementary and secondary schools, adequately financed and free to pioneer, might offer a second language in every grade, and perhaps a third in the upper grades, with emphasis on conversational skill and cultural understanding, with systematic programing, continuity, and competent teachers, and with follow-up studies of effectiveness and nationwide reporting.

7. *Understanding of the American economic system must be an important objective of a freedom-oriented educational effort.* Materials which are being produced by national organizations devoted to economic education, as well as available inservice educational opportunities for teachers, should be taken into account, with proper caution lest partisan

indoctrination displace objective education, or lest enthusiasm for economics or any other subject lead to neglect of other substantial areas in the curriculum.

8. *Adequate curriculum development depends upon increasing interdisciplinary efforts,* since the complicated and novel forms of many leading problems of our time call for a variety of talents and insights for their comprehension and solution.

9. *Since the vitality and quality of the performing and creative arts are crucial indices of the state of our ideals, new ways should be sought to encourage their study and practice from elementary schooling through adulthood.* Few avenues of approach to international understanding offer greater promise than an emphasis on the arts and literature of other peoples.

10. *At every educational level, student activities should provide significant citizenship experience* and give meaning to later study of American and world problems. Student government, community projects and interscholastic activities can significantly enrich the classroom offering, especially if they do not involve loss of educational perspective or the pursuit of goals which are neither civic nor academic.

Dealing With Controversial Issues in the Schools

★ **The classroom consideration of issues on which there is public disagreement is a primary responsibility of education for effective citizenship.**

Instruction about communism should be set within a framework of national and world affairs, and should make use of the best scholarship available.

1. *The consideration of controversial subjects should have a central place in our educational process, since the ability to cope reasonably with differences of opinion is essential to effective living in a free society.*

2. *The American tradition of academic freedom must be stoutly defended and extended at all educational levels, including the elementary and secondary, where community pressures are sometimes great.* A major study might appropriately be made to discover what curriculum content, if any, is being omitted from our schools because of pressures from outside the classroom, what kinds of ideas and materials are being urged upon the schools by outside groups, the extent to which school authorities develop and support policies of academic freedom, and the inclina-

tion and ability of teachers to teach rational methods of inquiry through the study of suitable controversial issues. State school agencies as well as local school boards and administrators should give strong support to teachers who carry out effective programs interpreting American ideals and promoting international understanding.

3. Despite some recent encouraging efforts, *there is still need for materials useful in the effective teaching of American ideals in a context of competing ideologies and systems.* To simplify and vitalize basic concepts so that they can be meaningfully incorporated in elementary as well as secondary curriculums demands the best efforts of experts in pedagogy and the subject areas involved. Experience suggests that neither recitation and ritual nor emotional exhortation has very much to offer.

4. In the exercise of their right to determine how the task of education in American ideals and international understanding shall be carried out in the classroom, *State and local school authorities should be keenly aware of the responsibility which our educational systems bear for the strength and welfare of the Nation as a whole.* They may find it advisable to develop written policies governing the handling of such controversial subjects as communism, to insure that such instruction will be accurate and constructive and that the classroom does not provide a rostrum for special interest groups.

5. *In spite of an increasing inclination to establish separate courses on communism, careful consideration should be given to the advantages of parallel study of this and other ideologies in connection with the study of American ideals and institutions.* Parallel study offers opportunities for meaningful contrasts at all grade levels.

6. *There is a need for classroom materials on communism which avoid pedantic dullness as well as the extremism which marks much public discussion of this subject.* Serious consideration should be given to how much of the history and doctrine of communism can be meaningfully communicated at various grade levels, so that simplification does not become distortion and hostility to communism retains a focus in reality. This is a project worth the attention of colleges and universities, educational foundations, and special task forces at the national, regional, or State level. State school offices should encourage and support the further development of such materials, as well as curriculum guidelines and policy suggestions for the handling of this sensitive subject area.

7. *Because the realization of American ideals and the retention of our country's position in world affairs require it, the schools should not*

hesitate to recognize the inconsistencies between American ideals and practices. The function of education and educators is not to defend but to expose and analyze such limitations on freedom as racial discrimination, economic and social deprivation, political corruption, or the abuse of power in any sector of society. The prescription of partisan solutions to current problems is not an appropriate classroom function, but the modification of the student search for solutions and the consideration of alternative lines of action are not only appropriate but vital functions.

Helping Teachers Make Teaching More Effective

★ **The National Defense Education Act of 1958 should be amended to strengthen teacher preparation in the social sciences and the humanities.**

★ **An improved means for disseminating current information relating to exchange programs and other international educational activities of the United States is urgently needed.**

1. *Achievement of the goals of the United States requires an immediate enlargement of the pool of qualified teacher talent.* A vigorous effort must be made to promote equal opportunities for education and to direct an increasing percentage of those who share these opportunities toward careers in teaching.

2. *Plans for the preparation of teachers should recognize that the responsibility for encouraging good citizenship rests upon all parts of the teacher preparation program.* Certain basic values and concepts should pervade even those classrooms whose subject matter does not bear explicitly on citizenship. Certification programs should therefore emphasize liberal education, including studies in political, economic, and social systems, the humanities, world cultures, natural sciences, and at least one foreign language.

3. *Preservice and inservice preparation of teachers in the social sciences and humanities should be improved by methods similar to those now being supported by the National Science Foundation and the National Defense Education Act of 1958* to improve mathematics, science, and foreign language instruction and school guidance services. Development of such programs will obviously require the strong support of the colleges and universities which prepare teachers. To accelerate the adoption of improved content and methods, major emphasis must

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be placed on inservice programs for already certified teachers. Amendment of the National Defense Education Act to provide support for projects in citizenship education should be seriously considered.

4. *Regional accrediting associations should be encouraged to transcend regional lines* in an effort to stimulate educational thinking, planning, and evaluation. Such associations and appropriate organizations of colleges and universities should re-examine their instructional and research efforts in promoting the international dimensions of education and strengthening the teaching of the ideals of freedom.

5. *Attention should be given to developing citizenship-oriented summer seminars for secondary school students.* With the freedom that the unstructured summer period permits, experimentation can be advantageously carried on, involving new teaching methods and materials and laboratory experiences with community problems.

6. *The possibilities of student and teacher exchanges are only beginning to be tapped.* Avenues inviting exploration include giving the management of some foreign project contracts directly to larger school districts, providing more overseas opportunities for educational administrators to increase their appreciation of the international dimension of education, promoting cross-regional exchanges within our country to deepen awareness of American ideals and problems, and sharing instructional materials, programs, and personnel with teacher-training and other college-level institutions in newly developing countries.

7. *The establishment of some clearing house of information concerning U.S. exchange programs and other international educational opportunities is urgently needed.* Access to these programs might be made more convenient for the educational community by centralizing in a single agency the Federal funds allocated to individuals and institutions in this country for international educational purposes, or by strengthening the procedures for cooperation among the several agencies handling such funds.

Improving Textbooks and Teaching Materials

- ★ **The selection of classroom and library materials must remain the responsibility of school authorities, even in times of public excitement.**
- ★ **Effective education for international understanding requires a free flow of educational and scientific material among nations.**

1. *Textbook companies and agencies responsible for instructional materials should be encouraged to upgrade and update all teaching materials used for education in American ideals and international understanding.* Local school personnel, State education offices, and colleges and universities have a particular obligation to promote the development and use of such timely materials. Paperbacks and multitext adoptions can increase the classroom availability of appropriate printed matter and encourage the replacement of out-of-date material.

2. *State offices of education should encourage local school boards and administrators to strengthen their programs and resources for citizenship education,* to develop study guides, materials, and guidelines for policy regarding their use, and to study their programs and materials in terms of effectivenesses and appropriateness for the grade levels in which they are used. They should invite the participation of colleges and universities, foundations, and other qualified personnel in the latter two undertakings.

3. *The selection of materials for use in the schools must remain the responsibility of the duly constituted school authorities, even at times and for subjects in which community interest is widespread.* Review of teaching materials by lay committees may be helpful, with appropriate regard for subject area competence and time limitations. The efforts of special-interest groups to impose materials on the classroom should be resisted.

4. *Publishers of instructional materials should expand their international education activity,* by participating in cooperatve publishing ventures with firms in other countries, by increasing the amount of publishing in languages other than English, and by making available books for translation and adaptation to the educational requirements of newly developing countries.

5. *The quality of instructional materials dealing with other peoples and cultures might be improved by submitting such matter to experts in the countries involved for review prior to publication.* Appropriate procedures might be established by the textbook publishing industry, scholarly societies, or international agencies.

6. The limitations of the textbook-only approach to knowledge being particularly apparent in the subject areas which concerned this Conference, *a major effort is urged to improve, enlarge, and more adequately staff the libraries of the elementary and secondary schools.* Representative current publications and monographs should be available,

and their use should be an integral feature of social science and humanities instruction.

7. *To avoid the pitfalls of a provincial approach to international understanding, there should be a free flow of educational and scientific materials among nations.* Relevant steps include legislative and other implementation of the Florence Convention of 1950, which was ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1959, revision of the copyright laws to eliminate restrictions on the importation of books manufactured abroad, and resistance to proposals which would block the importation and circulation of printed matter from Communist or other sources or otherwise restrict access to educational materials on purely ideological grounds.

8. *Effective teaching about freedom rests upon confidence in freedom.* Such threats to the integrity of teaching and learning as special loyalty oaths and disclaimer affidavits should be opposed. Programs of financial support should recognize that contract restrictions inhibit freedom of research and distort the educational effort to the detriment of those parts of the curriculum on whose effectiveness the realization of freedom particularly depends.

9. *The U.S. Office of Education should disseminate bibliographies of curriculum materials* on the ideals of American freedom and the international dimensions of education, covering all levels from the kindergarten to adult programs. It should also serve as a clearinghouse for the results of research and experimental projects in these areas.

Promoting Closer School and Community Relations

- ★ **Greater educational use should be made of the cultural diversity and rich cultural resources found in most communities.**
- ★ **The culturally deprived areas of our larger cities present a special challenge to the meaningful teaching of the ideals of American freedom.**

1. *Our metropolitan areas represent vast reservoirs of technical, professional, and artistic skills and talents, which need to be more intimately related to classroom activities.* The study of American problems should involve competent spokesmen from various fields of endeavor, who can bring depth and realism to citizenship preparation. The terms of such lay participation must, of course, be clearly defined by the responsible school authorities to insure that axe-grinding and demagoguery do not subvert educational objectives.

2. *Teachers should be encouraged to make full use of urban cultural resources,* such as museums, galleries, and libraries, especially in connection with the study of world cultures. Areas outside metropolitan centers can be served by organized student tours and traveling exhibitions. Cultural fairs, with representatives from various countries displaying and discussing their arts, and programs involving persons of foreign birth or extensive experience abroad, for example, Peace Corps returnees or exchange students and teachers, can enliven classroom consideration of world affairs.

3. *There is urgent need to improve the teaching of the ideals of American freedom and international understanding to the millions of students in the culturally deprived areas of our central cities.* The scarcity of lay leadership and the nature of the social structure may require a new concept for staffing schools in these areas and the development of new kinds of learning experiences extending into the evenings and the summers. The ideal of equality of educational opportunity is not necessarily well served by applying the forms and methods of rural or suburban schools to a deteriorating urban environment.

4. *A massive mobilization of continuing and adult educational resources is needed to assist today's adults in meeting the challenge of a rapidly changing and expanding body of knowledge.* While the preference for vocational and hobby courses at this level is understandable, major attention should be given to developing significant and attractive programs in the subject areas with which this Conference is concerned.

Defining the Educational Role of the Federal Government

★ **A task force of distinguished jurists, historians, educators, and other civic leaders should be established to study and report on the proper role of the Federal Government in educational affairs today.**

One of the most provocative and challenging responsibilities facing the people of the United States is to restudy the role of the Federal Government in planning, executing, and evaluating educational programs. Constitutionally and traditionally education in this country has been a State and local function. But certain limitations in this approach have become manifest. Some States are less able financially to sustain high level educational systems. Special programs which are in the national interest have failed to elicit sufficient local enthusiasm to secure support.

Regions have particular biases and cultural traditions which have restricted the search for truth, the free flow of knowledge, the encouragement of self-analysis, and particularly the extension of human rights.

How can the Federal Government, within the framework of law and tradition, improve the educational machinery needed to strengthen freedom at home and abroad? Should it have (*a*) a leadership role in stimulating educational improvement, (*b*) a juridical role in protecting academic freedom and equality of educational opportunity, or (*c*) a support role in financing special programs of national concern or supplementing the resources of the States? Upon the answers to these and other questions the development of much of this country's educational future depends. It is essential that the answers be sought outside the arena of partisan and vested interests.

Looking Ahead

THE CONFERENCE was invited to consider the future educational environment and needs of the American people, an assignment at once intriguing and hazardous. Yet the need to look beyond today and tomorrow is imperative. So slow are the normal processes of institutional evolution that changes in concepts and programs must be pioneered now to have substantial impact on the education given to children born this year who will receive high school diplomas in 1980 and college degrees in 1984. The present ferment about the schools is evidence of a widespread desire to reduce the drag of tradition and inertia that impedes realistic adjustment to contemporary needs. Although a heartening willingness to reexamine old assumptions and to experiment is being manifest in many educational circles, nothing in the national or international picture justifies complacency.

Within the brief sessions of this working conference it was difficult to do more than identify some of the factors which must be taken into account in determining our long-term educational needs. The fullest possible utilization of the rich research resources available in this country is called for, to consider in detail how American education can more satisfactorily prepare for such major developments as those listed below.

Identifying the Long-Range Objective

★ **Our fundamental goal is a progressive nation in a peaceful world, served by an educational system which promotes the fullest individual self-realization for both sexes and for all races, classes, faiths, and nationalities. Achieving this objective demands understanding of and commitment to the proposition that education is a primary instrument for social advancement and human welfare.**

Broadening the Task of Education

★ **The next generation will see increasing and worldwide demand for political self-determination, equal individual rights, and expanding educational and economic opportunities.**

★ **Problem solving within and among nations will involve increased planning at various levels and increased international cooperation.**

Without prophetic authority but with some confidence, the Conference anticipated these national and worldwide trends which will place new and greater responsibilities upon our educational enterprise:

1. *Knowledge, both basic and applied, will continue to expand at a rapid rate.*

2. *Technological change will continue to be rapid.* While everyone will be affected, the rate of change will continue to be uneven, field by field and area by area, creating many problems of adjustment within and among nations.

3. *These changes may be expected to have the following results which affect the educational mission:*

a. Increased efficiency of human labor.
b. Increased leisure, increased unemployment and/or increased production.
c. Problems of maintaining consumer purchasing power in order to use total production.
d. A probable rate of economic growth sufficient for higher standards of living and reduced unemployment.
e. Reduction in opportunities for unskilled labor, including farm labor.
f. Need for an increased supply of trained and qualified manpower, especially in the newly developing countries.
g. Increased urbanization.
h. Increased mobility of persons.
i. Improved facilities for communication, world-wide.
j. Increased complexity of economic and social relations among peoples.
k. Growing interdependence of areas and nations.

4. *There will be a growing demand in this country and elsewhere for fuller recognition of human dignity* in the form of:

a. Self-determination and the end of all forms of colonialism.
b. Equal rights and opportunities, without discrimination as to sex, race, caste, class or religion.

c. Accelerated economic development and expanding employment opportunities.
d. Enlarged opportunities for education for both young and old.
e. Wider creative participation in the arts and other cultural activities.

5. *World population will increase rapidly,* with consequences both favorable and unfavorable:

a. Continuing advances in medical knowledge, prolonging life and improving health on a worldwide basis.
b. Population pressure, aggravating international tensions, and individual distress unless knowledge is brought effectively to bear on the problems involved.

6. *Tensions involving varying degrees of conflict will persist within and among nations, whether or not the Cold War continues.* Sources of tension and promise include:

a. Conflict and realinement among dominant economic, social, and political units, on the one hand, and forces and movements seeking adaptation to new conditions and new human demands, on the other.
b. Increasing demand for more orderly arrangements for resolving conflicts within and among nations, by increased planning at various levels and by increased international cooperation.
c. Increased communication between countries and collective consideration of common problems, in the United Nations and elsewhere, with significant effects upon the value systems of all peoples.

7. Two additional major developments which are well within the realm of possibility have particular bearing upon future education in the principles of freedom and international understanding:

a. Continuing modifications in the political systems of the Communist countries, which may provide greater opportunities for individual freedom.
b. Continuing modifications in the political and economic structure of the United States, which may require greater governmental responsibility and greater efforts to relate individual freedom to the national interest.

Planning for the Future

★ **The Federal Government should increase financial support to all levels of education, not to supplant but to supplement what the States are doing.**

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- ★ **Students in secondary and higher schools and all teachers should have educational experiences abroad.**
- ★ **The length of the school day and school year should be extended to meet the increasing needs of students and society.**
- ★ **Standards should be raised at all levels.**

The adequate discharge of our educational responsibilities in the areas of American ideals and international understanding will require even greater effort than our people have heretofore made. The following proposals supplement and reemphasize recommendations made earlier in this report. Some of them are admittedly debatable; all of them merit serious public discussion.

1. *Education must be recognized as a national as well as a local concern.* The Federal Government must increase financial support at all levels, including adult education, not to supplant but to supplement what the States are doing. Furthermore, some members of the Conference believe that there is a national responsibility to suggest minimum standards, balanced with decentralized authority in applying these standards according to widely varying community needs.

2. *The people of the United States must find satisfactory means to assure the same high quality and sufficient number of teachers for students in all schools, public and nonpublic.* Institutional and academic freedom cannot include freedom for mediocrity anywhere in our pluralistic educational system.

3. *A comprehensive program of general education should be provided for all citizens, in addition to specialized and vocational training.* The general education which should occupy a large part of the attention of the student from kindergarten through the undergraduate college should center on the great problems of human relations from the interpersonal to the international. Nor should general liberal studies be neglected in adult education. A substantial financial commitment to research in the social sciences and humanities is needed in order to give substance to this undertaking.

4. *Learning to read and speak in foreign languages is an integral part of education for contemporary living.* Possibly competence in one foreign language should be a requirement for most high school graduates in the next generation; certainly it should be for college graduates.

5. *Participation must increase in worldwide cultural relations programs,* such as educational exchanges, international contacts among edu-

cational institutions, technical assistance, etc. Ideally all American students at secondary and college level should have educational experiences in foreign countries. Teachers should have a minimum of one year of study or teaching abroad.

6. *The present lengths of the school day and school year, accidents of history, must be extended,* in accordance with the increasing needs of students and society.

7. *There must be full freedom for teachers and students to explore all fields of knowledge free from censorship and arbitrary community pressures.* The mass media, public authorities, and private organizations which influence public opinion must share with the schools the heavy responsibility of guaranteeing that the channels of inquiry are kept open and that even the most controversial subjects may be discussed in the marketplace of ideas.

8. Continuing positive efforts must be made to assist present and coming school generations to understand American society, its merits and its limitations, and its great potential for producing and accepting change within the framework of the world community.

Continuing the Discussion

★ **A major national conference on the ideals of American freedom and the international dimensions of education should be held, with White House sponsorship, after sufficient time for the preparation of working papers.**

All committees of the Conference agree that this event was no more than an elementary exploration of immediate and long-range needs of education for freedom and international understanding. We applaud the leadership of the U.S. Commissioner of Education in convening the Conference and setting its tone in his keynote address. We urge that the several parts of this report now be subjected to careful and authoritative examination. We further recommend that a national conference on the same theme, at White House level, take place after sufficient time for the preparation of policy papers. After the national commitment and leadership have been thus expressed, there will undoubtedly be need for regional and State conferences to involve all appropriate resources and institutions in this task of adapting our educational system to the needs of a dynamic nation and a world in flux.

This is a task worthy of the support of all Americans.

APPENDIX

Conference Addresses

WHILE THE MAJOR ACTIVITY of the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education centered in the meetings of committees from whose deliberations the preceding sections of this report have been produced, the unity of the Conference resulted, to a significant extent, from the general sessions, which were addressed on successive days by the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sterling M. McMurrin, the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Philip H. Coombs, and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Abraham Ribicoff. The texts of these three addresses are printed on the following pages as important elements of the complete conference report.

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Education for Freedom in a Free Society*

by

STERLING M. McMURRIN

U.S. Commissioner of Education

WHEN WE ASK the question of the responsibility of our schools in the matter of freedom, we confront a primary task of education, for quite certainly among the purposes of education none is more basic than the understanding, appreciation, criticism, and perpetuation of the culture, and among the defining properties of our culture, none is more central than freedom and none is more pertinent to the large issues that now occupy us. The problem is not whether education has responsibilities here, but rather what they are and how they can effectively be mounted. The ideal of freedom pervades the whole structure of our personal and corporate life and it falls therefore upon all the institutions of our society, singly and collectively, to protect and cultivate it and to keep it a viable quality of our culture. The specific task of education must be identified within the context of the primary function of education, which is the achievement and dissemination of knowledge, the cultivation of the intellect, and induction into the uses of reason. Only when the school's energies are centered on these intellectual purposes will it also contribute effectively to the artistic, moral, and spiritual life of the individual and society.

Tradition of Reasonableness

Our people have a firm tradition of respect for reason and for what reason entails—knowledge, evidence, and a careful assessment of the pros and cons of every issue. This is not to say that we have always behaved with reasonableness in the past or to guarantee that we shall avoid irritational attitudes and conduct in the future. It is to say that our civic passions are quite commonly responsive to the persuasions of evidence and that we have built into our habits of thought and action those deterrents and inhibitions that in part account for the stability of a people whose public life is a scene more of discussion, deliberation, and effective compromise than of emotional extremes and arbitrary decision.

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*Address delivered before the first general session of the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education, Washington, D.C., March 26, 1962 (revised).

That we have such extremes is all too evident. We can look in many directions and see evidences of irrational behavior of all kinds, in public and in private life. In some instances the matter at hand is trivial, or at least of no general concern. In others something very real and very precious may be at issue. Often there is at least a loss of the composure and self-possession that are among the chief adornments of a mature society, a loss of the serenity and self-respect that are the ground of the dignity of a civilized nation.

The commitment of our public life to reasonableness is of long standing and very deep. It perhaps is not unrelated to the fact that the large events of the founding of the Republic belonged to the American Enlightenment, and that some of the founders were among the best specimens of that age that produced specimens of a very high order, who believed that tyranny was the product of superstition and ignorance and that freedom was the fruit of knowledge and reason. But far beyond that, the roots of our tradition were in the classical doctrine that man is the rational animal, and that his ultimate good lies in the cultivation of his reason, a doctrine that has had a long and illustrious history. It was the foundation of the Greek conception of the virtuous life and the good society, and the basis of the stoic philosophy that gave structure to Roman law and order. It was Christianized as the basic tenet that the rationality of man is the image of God. And it became the chief foundation of modern humanism with its liberal doctrine of man and its optimistic conception of human history.

Now among all the modifications of recent decades in the intellectual, moral, and spiritual life of the western world, none has been more radical or far reaching, and none more ominous in its prospect, than the decline of this belief in the rationality of man and the loss of the faith in his sure determination of his future. That this decline, which has affected secular and religious thought alike, and has touched the political life of nations and the personal life of individuals with doubts, fears, and anxieties of every description and dimension, has not cast its blight upon us in the same degree as on some others is due in part to the fact that until now, at least, we have not suffered the frustrations, defeats, and tragedies that they have known.

But we are now affected by a malignant anxiety and the threats of irrationalism hang heavily and precariously over us and the events of recent years are an ominous warning that even here the force of reason can fail and men can be moved more by emotion and passion or inordinate ambition than by knowledge and wisdom and a reasonable dedication to the public good.

Yet where we are guilty of such attitudes and behavior, and suffer the private and public losses that these entail, it is within the context of a general commitment to reasonableness that sooner or later recalls us to our senses, restores our balance and judgment, and leaves us embarrassed,

chastened, and perhaps a little wiser. It is this precious commitment to reason, which is central to so much that is of intrinsic worth not only in our intellectual pursuits but as a quality of our moral and spiritual life, and upon which so much depends in our practical affairs, that is entrusted to our schools. Whether they effectively cultivate a genuine respect for reason, not simply in some but in all of their students, instilling in them a passion for knowledge and for the quest for knowledge, and affecting thereby the whole character of our society, will decide their success or failure in the management of this inheritance.

Such a thing as our sense of obligation to knowledge and reason is quite properly seen as an inheritance, for it is something that cannot be created or established in a day. It is not something that can at will be put on or taken off, or be imposed artificially on others, or be legislated into or out of existence. It has evolved through the centuries with the culture, is transmitted by it from generation to generation, and is indeed not simply a part of the culture but an essential quality of its very nature. If under pressures of whatever kind our people were to abandon their basic trust in knowledge and reason, the culture in which we move and flourish, which is in our thought and action, and which at once determines and is determined by us, would be at its end. The future, whatever else it might be, would be a different world for us from what we now know and have known.

Now in this matter we have no reason to believe that our schools will not in the future prove worthy of their task. They came into being as the chief bearers of the intellectual life of our society and there is no other institution to assume the burden of their responsibilities. But our faith in the capacity of our schools to insure the future stability of our society by guaranteeing that our decisions and actions will be determined by a calm and thoughtful reliance upon knowledge and a careful examination of causes and consequences is, after all, in part a faith in our own willingness to continually examine and critically appraise our educational program at every level. It is a recognition that we have the capacity to define the basic problems that confront us at any particular time and to see clearly their relevance to the proper activity of the schools. Whether it is seen on the domestic or world front, contemporary history is moving at an accelerated pace and in the future those problems may be expected to appear in great number. In the years ahead the schoolmen, like the wicked, will have no rest.

Freedom and the Individual

When we turn to the issue of freedom itself, which is so intricately involved with the question of reasonableness, the picture is subtle and complex. Freedom was not begun in a day. Its history is long, with ups and downs and devious paths. Freedom is something that is won, or achieved,

that is lived through, or that is always about to be born. It is not something that is simply planned, or decided upon. It must come into being through the life struggles of a people. Clearly it cannot just be borrowed, adopted, or adapted.

But there is not just one freedom. There are many. And it is not freedom in the abstract that should concern us here, but the concrete and particular freedoms that are or should be real and viable in the processes of our society and the lives of our people—freedom to think and freedom to speak—freedom to write and to read—freedom from want, from fear, from pain—from ignorance, conformity, custom, boredom, and superstition—freedom from the oppression of both majorities and minorities—freedom from the crushing weight of the state—freedom from the tyranny of the past and from every form of tyranny that can rule the mind and heart and soul of man—freedom to be in the full sense a person whose personality is individual, in whom uniqueness is encouraged and independence is real. All of these and many more are elements of what we mean by freedom, and certainly these and many more are at issue when we ask the basic questions about political, economic, and intellectual freedom. There is much more for those who dig deeply and ask the question of the freedom of the will, with its scientific, metaphysical, theological, and moral implications. And there are matters of large practical import in the issue of the freedom of history—or better, freedom *from* history, freedom from the inexorable determinations of a purposeless fate, or from the unyielding logic of the blind mechanical forces of nature.

Now if there is anything that lies at the very heart of freedom as we know it, however vaguely and imperfectly, as an ideal of our culture, and freedom as we want to cultivate and protect it, the freedom that is so precious to us, it is the person taken as an individual. Clearly, the individual is at the very center of the meaning of freedom for us. His aims and purposes and his acceptance of responsibility are integral to freedom as a living experience. Any serious discussion of freedom and of the ways to enhance and preserve it must come to grips with the fact of the individual and the moral ideal of a society that is structured to that fact.

Here again is something that was not achieved in a day, a century, or even a millennium. The individualism that is central to so many of our judgments of value, and is so commonly the foundation of our institutions, that seems so solid and entrenched, and yet at times is in precarious balance, is the product of a long and adventurous history, from at least Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who among our cultural ancestors first proclaimed unequivocally the moral responsibility of every person, to William James, who more vigorously than any other insisted upon the ultimate reality of the individual against the claims of the absolute.

No discussion of the American ideal of freedom and the American ideal of individualism can ignore the history of the impact of nineteenth century Hegelian absolutism on much European social and political theory and its eventual failure in our own country. Hegelian logic, metaphysics, and historical dialectic were imported into this country after the Civil War, but they did not take. Nor did the Hegelianism that appeared in a more academic garb around the turn of the century. It now appears that American thought and practice are and have been so inextricably involved with the particular and the individual that any world view or political or moral system that does not grant full and independent reality and the highest value to the individual will eventually be successfully resisted by the American mind. That this resistance is associated with our empirical, nominalistic, and pragmatic propensities and with our suspicion of speculative metaphysics or the methodology of extreme rationalism or mysticism is beside the point. The fact is that absolutistic philosophy has always had and continues to have a rough time in this country, and where Hegelianism with its ontological subordination of the particular to the absolute, and its political subordination of the individual to the state became the chief theoretical ground for Fascist, Nazi, and Communist totalitarianism, in American politics it went unnoticed and in American metaphysics it was forced to yield to the claims of the individual.

There is no *the* American philosophy, and we may hope that there never will be, for the concept of a single intellectual system which pretends to the finished truth is contrary to our most cherished and basic intellectual ideal, that the quest for knowledge should be various and open and unending. But there clearly is what may be called a dominant spirit and temper in American thought, unquestionably deriving in part from, and in turn influencing, American practice, that informs the character of both metaphysics and ethics and transforms whatever else it may touch—a radical individualism that insists that reality resides ultimately in the individual as such and that the good, however else it may be described, is definable ultimately only in terms of the individual.

This individualism, which is so entirely consonant with the principles and practices normative for a democratic society, must be the keystone of any attempt to assess our institutions or judge our social arrangements, as it must be the keystone of any attempt at an interpretation of contemporary history that will give meaning to the events in our past and present. It is only on the firm ground of such individualism with all of its pluralistic implications, both theoretical and practical, that we can take our stand against the monolithic structure of the totalitarian states. It is only here that we can justify our way of life and our kind of institutions against theirs. And it is only here that we can look for increased strength for our Nation and new vitality for our culture.

Responsibility of the School and the Scholar

There is a sense in which the task of the American school is expressed in the task of the American scholar. And his task must always be defined first by the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. To not stand firm against whatever would compromise the integrity of his search for truth would be to dishonor himself and to fail in a high and sacred obligation. Yet the scholar's concern is properly with the uses and abuses of knowledge, as well as with its achievement and dissemination, and with the state and character of his society and culture. His disinterestedness is his stubborn refusal to suppress the facts, to subject theory to policy, or to otherwise yield to the pressures of those who would restrain him in his pursuit of truth or would convert his abilities and efforts to unworthy purpose. It is not a denial of his obligation to serve those practical ends that are fully consonant with free inquiry and that may even be its essential condition. Certainly one of the greatest of cultural tragedies was the sterility of German learning that removed the scholarly enterprise of that nation from a genuine critical involvement with the affairs of the society and state and thereby contributed importantly to the possibility of the tyranny that was to destroy the very foundations of intellectual life. Whatever pressures may be brought upon him, the scholar must forever refuse to forfeit his role as a critic of his society, just as he must never fail to faithfully describe and represent it.

But criticism in itself is not sufficient. The meaning of education relates to the total life of the individual, and its aims are directed especially and primarily to the cultivation of his intellectual capacities. The individual cannot, however, be abstracted from his society in either the determination or pursuit of his values, and the full purpose of education involves the strengthening and the perpetuation of the culture. The American scholar and the American school must now fully assess their responsibilities both general and specific and measure their resources against the large problems that are now faced by every individual and that confront our society. Our Nation is in deadly peril and the world of our values is torn internally and threatened from without. Nothing less than our full commitment and determined effort will bring to them the strength that may mean the difference between their life and death.

In the pursuit of these large tasks we face many problems. Not the least of these lies in our general carelessness in the support of the basic branches of learning. Our large involvement in technological education is understandable, but even the progress of our technology is endangered by our too small investment in theoretical science, and our academic neglect of the humane studies and the fine arts can have a seriously damaging effect upon our culture. One of the major deficiencies in our national effort to meet the challenges before us is the almost complete failure of the American people to recognize that the strength of a nation lies in its art and music and litera-

ture, and in its philosophical sophistication and the quality of its social sciences, just as much as in its physics and chemistry or its electrical engineering. When we raise the question of the survival of our Nation it is a question in proximate range of statesmanship and machinery. But when we speak of the decline or rise of our culture and the strength of the Nation for the long haul ahead, it is a question of the full cultivation of our spiritual, artistic, moral, and intellectual resources. Those who suppose that great music or great poetry or a knowledge of classical literature is not essential to not only the quality but even the survival of a nation and its culture are quite unaware of the lessons of the past.

Today we are confronted by internal forces that are already injuring the spirit and morale of our people. We have known for a long time that petty demagogues and tyrants can achieve some following in this country. But this time they are raising their heads in a shrewd and calculating manner that deceives large numbers of the unsuspecting and even promises to endanger intellectual freedom in the name of national security. Such efforts must be resisted with great strength, for the loss of that freedom would entail the loss of most everything that is precious in the foundations of our society. Those who contribute to the destruction of freedom, whatever their purposes or intentions, assume for themselves an ominous responsibility. It is now one of the great tasks of those in academic life to stand firm for the preservation of intellectual freedom and to demonstrate by their own integrity, wisdom, sense of responsibility, and commitment to high purpose that the salvation of our Nation does not require the destruction of its own highest values.

To put it briefly, the large and continuing crisis in which we now find ourselves as a Nation and as individuals is a crisis in the liberal ideal out of which our basic values have come, and which is quite certainly at once the genius of and the finest product of western culture—the recognition of the ultimate worth of the individual person, the valuing of knowledge for its own sake as well as for its uses, the faith that human reason is the most reliable instrument for solving human problems, and the commitment to the well-being of the individual as our noblest end. Today as never before we must cultivate the broadest human sympathies and a genuine identification with the whole of mankind. Our past local and national isolations are gone and the provincial attitudes that arose from those isolations are doomed to die. The instruments of education must be employed to more adequately prepare us for the new world-mindedness that must replace those attitudes.

It is a basic assumption of democracy that there is a coincidence of the good of the individual with the good of society, that the pursuit of the good of the individual will in some way contribute to the quality, stability, and strength of the society taken as a total entity. It is now our task to justify that faith and by serving the high principles of a free society build a future whose course is determined by those who are true lovers of freedom and for

whom the worth and dignity of the individual is the proper foundation of social policy and social action.

We must refuse to believe that the historic possibilities of our culture have all been laid before us. We must refuse to believe that the future is closed. We must refuse to believe, as the Marxists insist, that the course of history is determined and that the decline of our culture is inevitable. By the quality of our educational effort and by the force of our commitment and our determination we must justify a new confidence in our power to affect the future.

We must cultivate in our people such a sense of high vocation and high purpose, and so adequately equip them with knowledge, good will, and courage, that they will not be frustrated or daunted by the monumental tasks that lie before us. Whether we like it or not, our enemy is deadly serious; he draws confidence from his conviction that history is on his side; his power is immense, and he is playing for keeps. Nothing less will do for us now than a new intellectual, moral, and spiritual vitality that will overwhelm the demonic forces of regimentation that are arrayed against us and establish the autonomy of human freedom over the otherwise meaningless and destructive course of history. Above all else, our commitment to the individual and his freedom must prevail. For those who have known the meaning of freedom, life on any other terms would not be worth the living.

The International Dimensions of United States Education*

by

PHILIP H. COOMBS

Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs

I FEEL a little like one of those modern professors who spends his time roaming around the world and returns to the campus the night before a lecture without having it prepared. Usually he ends up telling the class what he has been doing lately and hopes that they can draw their own generalizations from his pragmatic experiences.

I find that after one rather intensive year on the firing line of international education, this topic gives me much more trouble than it would have given me 2 or 3 years ago, when I knew less and life seemed much simpler. If I do not have easy answers to some of the problems that become more urgent all the time, it is because I have spent much time this past year traveling to all the major continents, observing their diversified cultures, exploring the problems of educational development, and trying to anticipate some of the implications for our own system of education.

[illegible] highly diverse impact of world affairs upon all components of American education, from the earliest grades to the most advanced levels. Indeed, I think it is very questionable now whether one can make a meaningful distinction between the domestic and the international aspects of American education.

The boundaries of any major university today extend beyond its own town. The campus covers the world. You can travel throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East and encounter old friends and colleagues from universities, doing their teaching, their research, their general work, far from home. It is very much the same kind of work they perform at home.

To get at this subject, I would like to break my remarks into two parts; first, some impressions I now have—and they are all still in transition—based on observations of foreign situtations, particularly in the less developed countries, which have great relevance to our own educational

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situation; and, second, some observations about the American education system itself in the light of international conditions.

Let me cite at random some highlight impressions that I brought home. I am sure many of you who have had a chance to observe Asia, Africa, Latin America, would share these impressions of some of the fundamental world conditions that must be taken into account in recasting our approach to education here at home.

Impressions of Education in Other Countries

The first and most conspicuous impression one gets, I think, in touring some of the countries in which ancient civilizations have tended to be dormant for so long and recently have come alive, is that these countries are being visibly affected today by the great tidal wave of modern technology, bringing innovations and what, from their point of view, are alien cultural styles and patterns.

In any city, any major metropolitan center anywhere in the world today, one sees many of the same things he sees in a major city in the United States. Two months ago when I was in Thailand for a conference of our cultural affairs officers and of the AID education officers, I found it even more difficult to cross the street in Bangkok than in New York City. The place is crawling with modern vehicles, largely U.S. produced. There on the main streets the movie houses are frequently showing the same moving pictures we would see here in the United States. One sees Western dress and many other evidences of Western civilization.

Intermingled with this, of course, are all the evidences of the ancient culture. Right beside the modern vehicles are animal-drawn and hand-drawn vehicles; along with Western dress is the traditional dress of the area; alongside conspicuous wealth is dire poverty. All over Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East today there are sharp contrasts between the old and the new, the rich and the poor. One hears all kinds of languages spoken in the streets.

Not very far beyond the outskirts of these cities in any continent, one sees a much more ancient picture, a picture that is going to change for better or for worse in the years immediately ahead. Although the villages have not yet been sharply affected, as have the cities, by the great wave of modern technology and Western civilization, they surely will not escape that wave for very long. The people are pouring by the millions from the villages into the cities. There is hardly a major city anywhere in the less-developed areas of the world that does not have a tent city or a shack city on its edges—a conglomeration of rural people seeking employment, seeking the excitement of modern life, seeking opportunity.

Another striking impression is of the gross inadequacies of the formal educational systems in these countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These millions who have poured in from the rural areas in such cities as Calcutta or Hong Kong are not served by the formal education systems that exist in these cities, because those education systems were never designed to serve ordinary people, country people, people requiring a skill sufficient to get them a job. Here again is a contrast between the education system as it exists and the kind of system that is urgently required to serve those societies in their now greatly changed status.

The educational facilities and provisions in these countries are grossly inadequate, not only in quantity but in quality and relevance. Much of the curriculum inherited from the past, usually from another land, is irrelevant to the immediate needs of the present population with its particular environment and aspirations.

Right along with this gross inadequacy of education in the developing countries, one gets the vivid impression of the ordinary people's fabulous appetite for education. There are two main things which these people identify with democracy. One is the political forms, free elections and the like; the other is educational opportunity for the whole population. They see in education, sometimes more clearly even than we do in our own society, the opportunity to climb the social-economic ladder, the opportunity to break out of a rigid class structure and to move upward. And so, politically, the demand for education is enormous, a demand which politicians cannot ignore. Their inclination, as is the inclination of politicians the world over, is to build visible educational monuments, to build buildings. However, building schoolhouses does not necessarily bring education to these countries; it is what goes on inside the schoolhouses that matters.

A fourth sharp impression is that education constitutes the most powerful potential force for change and for advancement in any of these countries. You see this strikingly in some of the African countries that had relatively few educated people to start with as they entered upon independence. Those few educated people represent an enormous force in those societies. You can see in areas where education has begun to spread at the elementary level the enormous change it brings with it—in agriculture, in small industry, in the general outlook of people.

After all, these countries do not have much capital to work with. Often they have great physical resources, yet untapped, but their greatest wealth of all is in their human resources which must be developed if these countries are to develop economically, socially, and politically.

There is a great tendency in development programs for finance ministers, planners, and economists to overstress the development of physical resources and to understress the development of the human resources that must parallel physical development. Some leading American and Western

European economists recently have concluded that the yield on investment in people through education, from a strictly economic point of view, is greater than the yield on physical investment. The economic history of the United States bears out this proposition.

A fifth striking impression is that, while each of these countries presents a very different set of circumstances, most of the basic problems and principles of education have a considerable universality. We can see in these less-developed countries many of our own educational problems in elementary form. They have a curriculum problem not unlike our own: the curriculum is obsolete. Time and knowledge have moved beyond the curriculum; it is frozen in textbooks and in the minds of teachers. In these less-developed countries the problem is more conspicuous, more extreme. They have a teacher-shortage problem, just as we do. The incentives for talented people to enter teaching are frequently not as great as the incentives to enter other fields. They have a shortage of science teachers, as we do.

There is the same kind of resistance to change in the curriculum and in educational methods and other institutional arrangements all over the world. I must say, as one who has found himself at times impatient with resistance to new ideas in our own education system, that it is cheering to go abroad, particularly to Western Europe, and look back at the United States from there. By comparison, we look like radicals in terms of innovation and acceptance of change in education. All over the world education always has been, I suspect, the most conservative of human institutions with respect to its own affairs. And so you see a resistance to change on the part of educators in many of the newer countries as well as in the older ones.

You see the same tendency toward overspecialization within education; the same universal tendency when adopting new methods or new materials, simply to superimpose them on the status quo rather than to alter the existing conditions basically by the infusion of new materials, techniques, and practices. These tend to be universal characteristics, I think, in a new country or an old one.

Another striking impression is the enormous effectiveness of what might be called the extracurricular educative forces at work in the less-developed countries. Some of these forces clearly are good. Even villagers who have no formal education are nevertheless able to learn rapidly when there is something available to learn.

There are other educative forces at work which are hardly constructive. Some of these, of course, are the work of demagogues who, in a calculated way, convey misconceptions and generate distrust and hatred. When the people have no basis for knowing better, they all too readily absorb whatever is available to be learned, the true and the false, the good and the bad alike.

Another educative force is one for which we as a nation must accept some responsibility. I refer to the powerful mass media of films and television. Programs which we regard as entertainment in the context of our own society are often powerfully educational—or mis-educational—in the context of another society where people accept the content as realism rather than fantasy. In Cairo, I was told, 60 percent of the television time is taken up with packaged American entertainment films—entertaining to us, educative to many people in that culture. In Tokyo, the average man on the street will tell you that he does not have to come to the United States to get to know us; he knows us well already through our television and movie films. In Nigeria not long ago, a BBC researcher was interviewing a Nigerian villager in an effort to discover the impact of modern television on various parts of the world. The Nigerian asked, "When are you people going to get automobiles like we have? All you seem to ride is horses." This villager was an ardent viewer of American Western films, shown on the local TV station. It is a very distorted picture of the West which is conveyed, not intentionally but in fact, through media which we regard as entertainment but which in non-Western countries are inevitably highly educational. I dare say that in many areas of the world, our own television programs and motion pictures have a greater impact in creating a lopsided impression of American life and values than the total effort of the U.S. Information Agency in creating an accurate impression.

These various extracurricular educative forces are creating at a rapid rate a strange blend of correct knowledge and reality and a new mythology which can be very mischievous. We need to worry more about this, I think.

Another sharp impression is that this great tidal wave of modern technology and alien cultural styles and patterns inundating these less developed areas, and indeed our own efforts to help them develop their economies, are having the effect of tearing asunder old cultural patterns, old value systems, old folklore and habits, that held together those societies in the past. It is not necessarily a bad thing for these old cultural patterns to be torn asunder, providing something else, and something better, is put in their place. Neither we nor they have yet thought hard about the ultimate impact of these new technologies, of economic growth, and of these educative forces upon the values, the sense of direction, and the basic cultural matrix of these societies in transition. This is a crucial matter, it seems to me, a particular challenge to the social scientists to probe deeply into the implications of these changes that are occurring in ancient cultures, partly as the result of our efforts to help them.

The final impression I will mention is that in many parts of the world there is no time to go about developing education in conventional ways. It would take generations to put a little red schoolhouse and a well-trained teacher in every village. There are 500,000 villages in India alone.

At a conference in Addis Ababa last May, where all the African education ministers were assembled to discuss their problems of educational,

economic, and social development, the representative of the Soviet Union addressed himself at great length, not to the problems of Africa but to the great educational accomplishments of the Soviet Union over the past 30 years. He presented considerable evidence of great strides that had been made, doing so obviously for the purpose of showing the Africans that if they wanted to get things done, the Soviet could offer them the best system for doing it. When he finished, a minister of education from one of the new countries in Africa thanked him very much, congratulated the Soviet Union on its educational progress over 30 years, but said, "We would like the delegate from the Soviet Union to understand that we don't have that kind of time." One gets the impression that, from the point of view of those who believe in freedom, Latin America has perhaps even less time.

The question is, of course: How do we in America best help these people to meet their urgent educational requirements? It is perhaps easier to list some things that we should not do than things we should do in attempting to help them. All through the former colonial areas there are thin carbon copies of the education system of the former colonial power. Often they are not the up-to-date model of the parent system, but even if they were, in many respects the curriculum and the methods would not be entirely appropriate to the importing country. Some of the European nations made, and are still making, enormously important educational contributions to their former colonies in Asia and Africa, but now that they are independent, these former colonial countries must shape their education systems to serve their new needs.

Certainly, one of the guidelines for us is not to try to sell a carbon copy of our education system to these countries, as good as it may be for our own situation. There is evidence that some of our technical specialists have unfortunately tried to do just that. However, on the whole I think it can be said that American advisers going abroad today do understand that we do not solve somebody else's educational problems with our own particular solutions. Every nation must design its own education to fit its own conditions, its own needs, and its own pocketbook.

I suspect also that, although our educational assistance to these countries in the last 15 years has undoubtedly done much good, it has, nevertheless, produced a lower yield than might have been possible had we taken a more comprehensive view, a less specialized approach, and if we had tried always to help them go to the heart of their educational problems rather than to nibble at the specialized fringes. Their problem, basically, is how to build quickly and economically an education system that will serve a whole population at all age levels, in the villages and cities alike, with relevant types of knowledge, skills, and values. This, I think, will not be accomplished simply by exporting our own highly specialized forms and approaches to education.

Under the new U.S. AID program, I am happy to say, there has already been a considerable shift to a more comprehensive approach to assisting other countries in educational development. Our AID missions today have been authorized and urged to assist other countries to strengthen their *whole* educational system, not simply one sector such as elementary education or university education. The United States is encouraging developing countries to engage in comprehensive educational development planning, integrated with overall economic and social development planning, so that educational priorities can be determined and concentrated efforts brought to bear on first things first, recognizing that the total job will take years.

I suspect that our greatest contribution in working with these other countries is to make educational innovation respectable—in the curriculum, in methods, in organization, and in all other respects. If these countries can have confidence that by departing from the stereotypes of education as they know them, they can have better quality and greater quantity of education at a price they can afford, I believe they will do a great job of educational pioneering from which the more advanced countries, including the United States, can learn a great deal.

Implications for Education in the United States

Let me now turn quickly to the implications of all this for our own education system. As I have suggested, there is an appalling gap in the less-developed countries between their educational needs on the one hand and the actual state of education, both in scale and content, on the other.

As for our own situation, I think we have to note an equally serious gap between where we are and where we need to be in our education system. This is not to ignore the enormous advances of American education in the past 25 or 50 or 100 years. But relative to the rapidly multiplying educational needs of this country, our system has not responded with sufficient speed.

In brief, what seems to have happened is that the explosion of scientific knowledge and new technologies, coupled with the revolutionary political and social changes throughout the world in the past 15 years, has outstripped our educational system and has left it in many respects in a serious state of inadequacy, obsolescence, and disarray. It is to the task of closing this gap, of adjusting our educational efforts and arrangements to meet the urgent demands of the times, I take it, that this Conference is addressing its attention.

It is a jarring thought to realize that what we are supposed to be doing today in American education is equipping the new generation to function effectively in the 21st century, only 38 years away. For most of us in this room, 38 years in the future seems much farther off than 38 years in the past, only 1924. But when we consider the vast and unforeseeable changes

that have occurred in the world since 1924—all kinds of breakthroughs and completely impossible-sounding things that no one would have dreamed of then—and when we realize that the pace of change has accelerated and is likely to continue to accelerate, obviously we cannot predict now what kind of an education today's youngsters will really need for the year 2000. It is essentially impossible to design a curriculum which we can be sure will do the most for today's young generation when they are adults, but we obviously have to do our best.

Certainly not all the products and practices of the past in American education are obsolete. There are many rich and valid and vital achievements that we bring from the past and that we will want to carry into the future, although age alone does not give validity or sanctity to educational practices and materials. The fact is that many of the maps, textbooks, even the history books currently in use are out of date almost before they are printed. We have somehow got to find ways to keep the curriculum, the materials, and the teachers themselves up to date in this age of rapid change. Even if we find these ways, we must recognize that after we have pumped a youngster full of the latest knowledge, he may still become obsolete, or his education will, soon after he leaves high school or college. We must therefore look for ways to give young people an education that will stick with them, that will not become quickly obsolete, that will enable them to continue their own education in pace with a changing world after they leave school and college. It is no longer possible, if indeed it ever was, to turn out "an educated man" who will long remain educated without continued effort and learning.

In traveling around the world, I have kept asking myself about my own education, as I am sure many of you have done. What were its shortcomings? What are the things I wish now I had learned in 1924 and since? Conversely, what are the things which I have found useful and which have not been rendered obsolete by all these changes in the world?

As far as the shortcomings are concerned, let me say that I do not feel short changed by what is now regarded as an obsolete scientific and mathematical education. I took a fair share of these subjects. I know they have changed a great deal, and I am glad the schools have lately registered these changes. Actually, I think this is not one of the most serious deficiencies in our schooling of 20 to 30 years ago. If we took good courses at the time and worked hard, we were prepared to keep up in general with changes in science, if we were interested in keeping up. We did get a good base.

One of the most obvious deficiencies for me was in the field of foreign languages. Like many others at the time, I learned to read the language, write it, analyze its grammatical structure, but not how to use it. I stopped short of really learning that language. For anyone involved in world affairs—and we practically all are these days—another language, whatever it is, is a great asset.

Another shortcoming, I feel, is in a field where I spent a good many more hours than in studying a foreign language; that is the field of history. All through school and college, many students who spend more hours reading books and listening to lectures on history than on any other subject, somehow emerge from the process not really having a sense or perspective of history. When I actually saw some evidences of history in India, Japan, Greece, France, England, Italy, Peru, I realized that history is actually a lively, exciting, worldwide, interconnected story of man—his trials and tribulations, his failures and successes, his imperfections and nobility. It helped me understand why people in other countries often see things differently, and how to help them understand our viewpoints better. We could assist the future generations tremendously if somehow we could convey a real sense of history to them.

Among the assets that came from the kind of education many of us had in the United States—to look at the positive side—is a sense of humanistic values and attitudes, which is almost bound to become part of anyone who goes through our kind of educational system. This is an enormously important asset in visiting other countries. These humanistic values have not yet found a real home in some other countries, and it is encouraging to find fellow Americans—in the AID program, the Peace Corps, the Foreign Service—displaying them abroad.

A second asset is what one might call the power of sensitive observation, coupled with a curiosity and an objectivity of observation, which again is one of the important products, I think, of our educational system at its best. This is, incidentally, an indispensable asset for every student, if he is going to pursue his own education beyond school or college.

Closely related is a third asset, the capacity to analyze new situations, to ask the right questions, to put facts and concepts into some new configuration, to get a new perspective, a new insight. This requires some kind of intellectual and often intuitive frame of reference by which to judge a new situation; that is where history and experience come in. It is of enormous value to be able to interpret a new situation in the light of insights and first principles picked up from other situations. This analytical capacity again is, I think, one of the rare products of American education at its best. We don't follow rote learning. We challenge young people to analyze situations for themselves, to interpret, to come up with their own answers, and to test those answers in the competitive marketplace of ideas.

A fourth asset acquired from American education at its best is a wholesome irreverence for the *status quo*. I refer here to the *status quo* as it applies especially to the forms and rituals of any society, including our own, and to one's ability to distinguish between the essential and enduring values in a situation as distinct from the superficial forms and rituals which sometimes stand in the way of maximizing the true values. Here again I think people who have gone through the American education system often differ considerably in their outlook and approach from those who have gone

through certain other systems, particularly those which are well calculated to preserve and reinforce rather than to change and improve the *status quo.*

Finally, an asset which I think we need to emphasize is a sense of appreciation of excellence, of beauty, and of human achievement at its highest. Here is one respect in which some of these so-called underdeveloped countries—these rich older cultures—are more developed perhaps than we. No country is underdeveloped or developed in all respects; it is not a simple matter of per capita income levels. There is room for a real interchange of riches among all countries.

These assets that derive from American education at its best that have a staying power, that do not get obsolete, that provide an individual with real power to move along with the changes of history, really all add up, I think, to some of the major hallmarks of a truly liberal education. I see no reason for limiting liberal education to a place called a liberal arts college, no reason for depriving, for example, students who may be terminating their formal education at the end of high school from getting a liberal education. Why should we not start right in with the first graders and begin consciously from the outset to give them a liberating kind of education containing and developing these assets I have tried to describe.

Well, I fear that in these remarks I have roamed like the professor who gets home too late from his travels to prepare the next day's lecture. In any event, I hope I have conveyed some impression of the extreme complexity, the great fascination, and the profound importance of all the changes going on around the world which deeply affect our own education system, not only in terms of the education we should be trying to give our own young people but in terms of the heavy responsibilities in world affairs, at home and abroad, which history has now thrust upon our educational institutions.

America and a Free World*

by

ABRAHAM RIBICOFF

Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare

IT IS GOOD to be with you—to come before this distinguished group of educators gathered in the Nation's Capital to study problems confronting American education today.

I want to thank you and your institutions for your generous response to Commissioner McMurrin's call for cooperative planning and leadership.

I am certain that the recommendations which you will present to us this afternoon will illuminate these matters with wisdom and clarity. The Office of Education will see that every school and college administrator, and every individual and institution concerned with education, has an opportunity to study your proposals. I know they will benefit from your deliberations.

I am encouraged by the tenor of this Conference—by its positive, forthright approach to the problems facing education. We have criticized ourselves. We have recognized our failures. We know where our errors were made and how they might have been avoided. Now let us set to work together to remedy these conditions.

Public Responsibility for Education

Inertia is our greatest danger today. We cannot continue just to rock along—merely to hope for the best—to remain complacent. In order to be the best we must demand the best, and we must give the best. In concrete terms this means that every individual and institution in our society has a job to do for American education.

For the individual, that job is the acceptance of his responsibility as a voter and taxpayer. It means concern with the problems of education in his community, his State, and his Nation.

For parents of school-age children, it means, in addition, closer study of the school curriculum to see that it meets their children's needs and abilities. It also means the enforcement of scholastic discipline in the home.

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*Address delivered before the third general session of the Conference on the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education, Washington, D.C., March 28, 1962.

For business, industry, and the professions, it means a heavier investment in education—through scholarships, work-study programs, endowment funds, and financial support of basic and applied research.

None of these activities is philanthropic. They are all geared to preserve our Nation's strength and to guarantee its future.

A Nation's Strength

The questions you have asked yourselves these past 2 days are serious questions, and they require serious answers. For they have to do with the strength of our Nation—nothing less—and our Nation's need for help in a time of need.

A nation's strength, of course, lies in the strength of all its people. A nation's strength is tested in many ways and in many times. It is tested in the output of our farms and industries, in the achievements of our great men and women, in the capability of our arms, in the genius of our science, and in the vigor of our commerce. But it is tested too in quieter places: In the well-being of its older citizens, in the care provided for the unfortunate and afflicted.

Importantly, too, it is tested in the aspirations of its youth and the quality of its schooling. The foundations of our society are rooted in education. Our democracy is no stronger than the moral and intellectual fiber of our people. Our country can be no richer than our teachers' minds and our children's opportunities.

This has always been true. But, since quiet strength and latent power are less tangible than arms or missiles, they have always been more difficult to realize.

In a sense, American education has become the testing ground for democracy.

What kind of education? What courses? What books? What requirements for teacher training? What focus will provide the fullest possible development of the skills and intellect of all our people—and will enable them to function responsibly in a democratic society?

These are the questions which the educators in this country are called upon to answer. For upon them—and through them, the people—rests the responsibility for safeguarding democracy and individual freedom.

The explosion of our population in this last half century—the explosion of knowledge in this age of unprecedented scientific discovery—the political crisis which democracy is facing around the globe—all these have magnified and complicated the task of education.

But clearly we must succeed, for the consequence of failure is self-evident.

"Socialism does not require war to spread its ideals," Nikita Khrushchev tells us. "Its weapon is its superiority over the old system in social organi-

zation, political system, economy, the improvement of the standard of living, and spiritual culture."

He is convinced that capitalism and democracy are in their final stages of decay. "The United States," he told the 22d Party Congress last fall, "the strongest capitalist power, is past its zenith and has entered the stage of decline."

A failure of democratic education—a gradual erosion of our moral and intellectual strength, our central source of power—is just what our adversaries are banking on. And they are willing to wait a generation—or two, if necessary—while we allow our schools and colleges to struggle along unaided, while we allow education to drift downstream without purpose, without support.

But if, on the other hand, we help Americans to grow and improve, if we help the minds of our young to flourish and grow in an atmosphere of freedom, we will create a bulwark against our enemies.

Federal Leadership

This Administration is not willing to sit idly by and let education stagnate. We feel that the Federal Government has the responsibility to provide leadership in the field of education—to give necessary assistance to education.

We know that popular opinion is not self-generating. It is shaped and formed by leadership. We know from experience that public opinion can be destructively wrong if it is devoid of responsible, informed leadership. We know this especially well in the field of education.

For too many years, the popular notion of good education was painless education. We were so anxious to see our young people adjust themselves easily to society without academic discipline and mental toil that we did not provide them with sufficient intellectual strength and sense of civic responsibility.

This was an error of judgment. For the perpetuation of freedom is not automatic. It is an acquired heritage—a precious possession to be zealously guarded and strengthened—and passed down to our children with proper instructions for its safekeeping.

This is certainly a vital part of good education in a democratic society. And it is encouraging to see you educators here today seeking ways to improve the public's knowledge of its democratic heritage and its responsibilities to the Nation and to the free world.

This conference, by the way, seems to me a fine example of the virtue of public leadership in a democracy without any semblance of control. The Office of Education asked you outstanding educators here to consider seri-

ous national questions. It provided you with the framework in which to find the answers. The answers will be *yours.*

As we seek together to restore the public's interest in its proper place in American education, let us not lose sight of the individual. Let us not be overwhelmed by the task before us into upsetting the balance between the individual and government which lies at the heart of a democratic system.

And as we seek together to improve American education and clarify its goals, let us seek to clarify a dangerous confusion that exists in the minds of many of our people today, and that is this:

Many, many people confuse the term "general welfare" with "welfare state," and the words "welfare state," in turn, become synonymous with "socialist dictatorship." For example, Federal aid to education—which would indeed promote the general welfare—is hounded by the myth of "Federal control," without any evidence to support that contention. This confusion is reflected in the attitude that critics of our education measures have exhibited. And it is equally apparent in the defensive, apologetic stance so frequently taken by those who advocate and support these measures.

If this confusion led only to domestic political arguments on this and other issues, it would be annoying but not crucial. But it has become much more than this. It has enveloped the free world. It has hurt the concept of democracy. It has led to misunderstanding on the part of our allies as to our purposes, our goals, and our ideals.

The President was asked at a press conference recently about the fact that his brother—the Attorney General—encountered a certain amount of hostility from student groups in foreign countries.

In his answer, the President spoke about the false stereotype of the United States held by these students. It is a stereotype almost 50 years old; the students haven't caught up with the tremendous changes which have taken place in the past half century or with the fallacies of the Marxist system which have become obvious in the last 20 years.

In addition—the President said—we are not able to emphasize those facts of American life which should be most attractive—our cultural efforts, our intellectual efforts, and the story of our achievements.

This, I think, is the heart of our problem. We haven't told our story—either within our own country or outside of it. We hesitate to proudly proclaim; we apologize for what is good and noble.

Our apologies for our general welfare legislation especially convey the impression to our friends that we are not interested in the general welfare of our people. For in their view, if we do like welfare, we must be for ill fare. And the Soviet Union has been quick to reinforce that impression and to set itself up as the model state which has the greatest concern for the welfare of every man.

How wrong this is! How ironic! For under freedom our country does more to promote general welfare than does any other. It has done so consistently since—and even before—the founding of this Republic. And today, our vigorous Nation spends about $90 billion—17 percent of our gross national product—for public—and private—programs in support of health, education, and welfare.

Shortly before his death, Thomas Jefferson wrote to James Madison:

> "If ever the earth has beheld a system of administration conducted with a single and steadfast eye to the general interest and happiness of those committed to it, one which, protected by truth, can never know reproach, it is that to which our lives have been devoted."

What Jefferson was describing was the one basic trend that runs throughout the history of this country. It was written in the Mayflower Compact and was part of the thinking of every group that started out in this land. This trend can be called humanitarianism or just plain neighborliness. Whatever you call it, it means that Americans have always had a deep concern for the other fellow. When a man's crop failed, his neighbors shared with him. Oh, they'd complain and growl, but they did it. Something deep inside compelled them to. When a man's barn burned down, his neighbors helped him raise a new one. They may have called him careless, shiftless, but they helped build a new barn.

This sort of thing is part of us. We do these things not to enlarge government, but to enlarge the opportunities of all our people. Instead of being ashamed of this trend—in our classrooms or in our homes—we should be proud of it.

Your classrooms are places for enlightenment and progress. If truth and hard work prevail, your students will be better citizens. And our Nation will be the gainer.

Conference Participants

THE INDIVIDUALS listed here met in Washington, D.C., on March 26–28, 1962, at the invitation of the U.S. Commissioner of Education, to participate in working discussions of the Ideals of American Freedom and the International Dimensions of Education.

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